

The following message, quoting a message from STALIN to the PRESIDENT, dated 21 APRIL 1943, was sent by Secretary Hull to the President on his visit to Monterrey, Mexico:

I have just received from Ambassador Litvinoff the following private and confidential message, dated APRIL 21, addressed to you by Stalin indicating that the Soviet Government has broken relations with the Polish Government-In-Exile. The text of Stalin's message to you follows:

"The recent conduct of the Polish Government towards the Soviet Union is regarded by the Soviet Government as absolutely abnormal and contrary to all rules and standards governing relations between allied countries.

"The campaign of calumny against the Soviet Union, initiated by the German fascists regarding the Polish officers they themselves slaughtered in the Smolensk area, on German-occupied territory, was immediately taken up by the Sikorski government and inflated in every possible way by the official Polish press. The Sikorski government, far from taking a stand against the vile fascist slander of the Soviet Union, did not even see fit to ask the Soviet government for information or explanations.

"The Hitlerite authorities, after perpetrating an atrocious crime against the Polish officers, are now engaged upon an investigation farce for the staging of which they have enlisted the help of certain pro-fascist Polish elements picked up by them in occupied Poland, where everything is under Hitler's heel and where honest Poles dare not lift their voices in public.

"The governments of Sikorski and Hitler have involved in these "investigations" the International Red Cross which is compelled to take part,

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under conditions of a terroristic regime with its gallows and mass extermination of a peaceful population, in this investigation farce, under the stage management of Hitler. It should be clear that such "investigations", carried out, moreover, behind the Soviet Government's back, cannot inspire confidence in persons of any integrity.

"The fact that this campaign against the Soviet Union was launched simultaneously in the German and the Polish press, and is being conducted along similar lines, does not leave any room for doubt that there is contact and collusion between Hitler, the enemy of the Allies, and the Sikorski government in the conduct of the campaign.

"At a time when the peoples of the Soviet Union are shedding their blood in the bitter struggle against Hitlerite Germany and straining every effort to rout the common foe of all liberty-loving democratic countries, the government of Mr. Sikorski, pandering to Hitler's tyranny, is dealing a treacherous blow to the Soviet Union.

"All these circumstances force the Soviet Government to infer that the present government of Poland, having fallen into the path of collusion with the Hitler government, has actually discontinued relations of alliance with the U.S.S.R. and assumed a hostile attitude toward the Soviet Union.

"In view of these circumstances the Soviet Government has come to the conclusion of the necessity for breaking relations with the present Polish government.

"I deem it necessary to inform you of the above and trust that the Government of the United States will realize the inevitability of the step which the Soviet Government has been compelled to take."

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END OF STALIN MESSAGE. The following are remarks of Hull:

In considering this matter the following are the more important developments with respect to Soviet-Polish relations which have taken place during your absence:

1. On April 14 the Polish Minister in the absence from Washington of the Ambassador brought to the attention of the Department the charges made by German propaganda agencies to the effect that the Germans had discovered near Smolensk a mass grave containing the bodies of some 10,000 Polish officers executed by the Russians in 1940. The Minister under instructions while acknowledging that the story might well be a fabrication on the part of the Germans, said that the Polish Government could not fail to take note of the allegations since it had for over a year and one-half been endeavoring to ascertain without success from the Soviet authorities the whereabouts of approximately 8,000 Polish officers known to have been captured by the Red Army in 1939. He also pointed out that in December 1941 the Polish Prime Minister himself had taken up with Stalin and Molotov the whereabouts of the missing Polish officers and advised this Government of the evasive reply received.

2. Lord Halifax on April 21 handed me an aide memoire indicating that because of the recent grave deterioration of Polish-Soviet relations there was a danger of serious trouble among the Polish armed forces abroad particularly those in the Middle East. It stated that Mr. Churchill was considering sending a message to Stalin. The draft text of this message, together with further information on recent developments and on the action which the British Government would like to take, would be communicated to

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the United States Government shortly with a view to ascertaining whether we would wish to make a similar approach to the Soviet Government.

The Ambassador said then that the aide memoire was only a preliminary reference and that he expected in a few days to receive a somewhat more elaborate statement from his Government. Lord Halifax has not yet taken up the matter in detail.

3. In connection with the statement in paragraph 4 of Mr. Stalin's message indicating that the International Red Cross has been "compelled" to take part in the investigations carried out behind the back of the Soviet Government, it should be pointed out that the American Consul in a telegram from Geneva dated April 22, 6 p.m. stated that he had been informed that the International Red Cross Committee had communicated on April 22 to the Polish and German Governments that the International Red Cross was prepared to propose the designation of neutral experts to conduct an investigation provided "all parties concerned" request it to do so (special reference to the Soviet Union as a party concerned was made therein).

4. The Department of State has thus far had no intimation from any source other than Stalin's message quoted above that the Soviet Government contemplates breaking relations with the Polish Government.

5. I am endeavoring to delay action on the Finnish matter until you return in view of the foregoing developments.

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